THE NEW REPUBLIC

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Faulkner: End of a Road

by Irving Howe

Nixon and the Hiss Case

by William Costello

Reconciliation in Algeria

by Jean Daniel

Tonight We Improvise

by Robert Brustein

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T.R.B. *from Washington*

Eisenhower's Royal Tour

★ President Eisenhower, accompanied by an over-elaborate secret service guard, is headed for a public relations triumph abroad. It will make easy reading – movement, color, amusing incidents, foreign climes – requiring a minimum of cerebration and producing a cozy, complacent glow at home. Don't sneer at it. Distant peoples will see a friendly, smiling, optimistic, good-hearted President uttering lofty platitudes, and they cannot but compare the mild reality with the ogre of Uncle Sam presented by our enemies. The benefits are the temporary good-will produced. The dangers are possible increase in domestic euphoria and the assumption that difficult problems are solved by royal journeys.

A Democratic nightmare is that a series of such journeys, with a publicity blitz like the current one, will blanket them out next year while Republicans chant "peace and prosperity." How would squabbling Democrats make the headlines next year while Eisenhower went serenely to a NATO conference in April, a Summit conference in June, a round of Allied capitals on his way back, and then a triumphal reception by the Cabinet, Nixon and Rockefeller – a personal report to Congress and another by television to the Nation!

It takes just about two months for the euphoria of this kind of thing to wear off. We do not mean to be cynical but we think the gilt is coming off the "Camp David spirit" rather rapidly now. Maybe Dean Acheson was too harsh in his criticism. The gloomy fact remains that Khrushchev has made virtually no concessions since he first threatened West Berlin one year ago, whereas our policy has seemed to waver and our relative strength to diminish. Meanwhile millions of Americans have somehow got the impression that the quarrel is all over.

Who's Weak Now?

★ Five years ago, in October, Nixon was stumping the West in a whirling demagogic attack on Acheson, Truman, Stevenson – and Alger Hiss – that even McCarthy could hardly have equalled. Here's what he said at Los Angeles, October 28, 1954: "There is nothing the Communists would like better than to return to the Acheson policy of weakness, inconsistency and compromise." At Beverly Hills he charged the World War II "peace was lost by the policies of the Truman-Acheson Administration." Always Nixon paraded Acheson as a symbol of "weakness" to Communism. Is it any wonder that Acheson might be tempted today to take the position, "Who's weak to Khrushchev now?"

Humphrey versus Nixon

★ A man we like is Hubert Humphrey. We don't follow his farm policies, nor do we think his chances of nomination bright. But on one point we are enthusiastic; he is this columnist's favorite anti-Nixon candidate. He would not approach such a fracas reluctantly nor as a martyr. His eyes glitter at the possibility: frankly he would love it. And we think he could take on Nixon, without using Nixon's peculiar style of weapons, and emerge the victor. It would be the bare-knuckle battle of the century.

The South, of course, doesn't like Humphrey. But really, is it possible for any Democrat in 1960 to take a position on civil rights less strong than his or Kennedy's and hope to win? Nixon and Rockefeller certainly aren't going to soft-pedal civil rights; where can the South bolt? Are the Democrats prepared to pay a price for "unity" that will lose the election?

Birth Control Controversy

★ World population is exploding. For years this reporter has seen the momentous statistics cross his desk, wondering when the story would break, when the idea would reach its time. Suddenly it has. Not in our lifetime – never again maybe – will the problem go back on the shelf. It is part of the Catholic doctrine that birth control by artificial means is a sin. This is as it may be. But of all the Church's dogma this seems to many outsiders the hardest to rationalize. Quite apart from theological debate, the fact seems to be that the ban on birth control is rapidly disappearing in the West, whatever the hierarchy says.

The West brings sanitation and modern medicine to backward areas and population explodes; not because births shoot up but because deaths decline. Last week the US Catholic bishops solemnly reaffirmed opposition to birth control, said the US Government should not encourage it abroad and tried to argue, among other things, that more food would meet the world's problems.

The Bishops' stand is peculiarly hard on the Presidential candidacy of Kennedy, the Democrats' front runner, a Catholic. He has taken a forthright stand for separation of Church and State. He has strongly backed federal education bills that lacked any aid for parochial schools. He has opposed an ambassador to the Vatican, persecution of Protestants in Spain, claims of church dogmas and papal utterances of any hold on the total behavior of an officeholder. Kennedy says the test is not what the church claims but whether he admits it. He does not admit it. Similarly, Al Smith in an article in *The Atlantic* indignantly wrote, "I've been a devout Catholic all my life and I never heard of these bulls and encyclicals and books."

Now Kennedy has sought to find a middle way on the acute issue of birth control. The fact is, of course, that the vast majority of Catholic officeholders do not act according to the exhortations of Church doctrine. But the Bishops won't retreat. And the controversy won't die.

The Taft Memorandum

★ We note that that secret posthumous memorandum from Taft blaming his 1952 defeat on "newspaper hostility and 'Eastern financial interests'," which we exclusively announced (TRB, November 23) has now appeared. Actually it wasn't the press and Wall Street that blocked Taft's nomination, as he charged. The reason was within himself: he was a bitter, partisan isolationist whom the conservatives, in a showdown, didn't dare run.

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Thaw in the South

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11. Washington Post

Five years ago last spring, the Supreme Court affirmed the general contention of five plaintiffs that public schooling in which racial segregation is obligatory does not provide equal opportunity. Five years ago next spring, the Court made its first specific applications of that principle. Since then, as a result of experience ranging from orderly compliance to violent resistance, the various ways in which affected areas are accommodating themselves to the Court's doctrine have become more or less clear. The problem has been one of finding techniques of desegregation applicable to widely varying circumstances, techniques that would make possible "deliberate speed," while avoiding the social breakdowns that occur when law fails to muster sufficient consent.

In this process, the experience of the state of Virginia, with its tradition of Southern leadership, has been peculiarly important. The Supreme Court's decision came less than two years after the feud between the South and the rest of the nation on the civil rights issue had been dramatized at the Democratic national convention of 1952: Governor John Battle of Virginia, supported in a crucial vote by the Illinois delegation, there led a successful charge against a party "loyalty pledge," and returned to his state as a new hero of the Confederacy.

Virginia's social geography not only includes school districts where low ratios of Negro to white population and attendant tolerant white attitudes resemble situations in the other states of the Upper South, in all of which some measures of desegregation were rather promptly adopted; it also comprises districts – particularly in the "Southside" below the James River – where low income, large Negro concentration, and high white resistance approximate the situation in parts of the Deep South, where five states have begun no desegregation whatever.

Until last spring, the "Southside" called the turns in Virginia. The town of Appomattox is in that region, and on its courthouse green is buried Hal Flood, the uncle from whom Virginia's senior Senator, Harry Flood Byrd, inherited not only his name but the political machine which has dominated public life in Virginia for three quarters of a century. It was Senator Byrd who decreed the policy of "massive resistance" which prevented any desegregation in the entire state, and which in the 1958-59 school year closed a number of schools that had been ordered by federal courts to admit Negro students.

As long as Virginia stood firm, the Deep South had a spokesman for its intransigence. But when, in defense of this principle of "massive resistance," schools were closed in several Virginia areas with small

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Negro populations, counter-forces arose to defend the public school system itself. By the narrowest of margins, these forces proved strong enough to prevail when Governor J. Lindsay Almond called a special session of the legislature, early this year, reversed his course and bowed to the inevitability of some desegregation. At school-opening time in September, without disorder, 86 Negro children entered formerly white schools in five of Virginia's 129 federal districts; 14 more are scheduled for admittance in two other school districts in January.

Varieties of Compliance

At the time of the Court's decision, segregated school districts in 17 states and the District of Columbia had a total enrollment of about 10 million white and 3 million Negro pupils. At the opening of the current school year, nearly 2.5 million white, and somewhat more than half a million Negro children were no longer segregated.

In a number of larger cities on the periphery of the Old South, several of them with large Negro populations, desegregation was effected soon after the Court decision and simultaneously over a wide area. School district lines were usually redrawn; children were then assigned to the school nearest their residence. (Most such plans permit parents of a child assigned to a school where his race is in the minority to apply for transfer to a school where his race is in the majority.) Louisville, where 84.6 percent of all pupils are now in schools attended by both white and Negro students, has perhaps received most publicity from its successful change-over, but city-wide desegregation has also taken place in Wilmington, Baltimore, the District of Columbia, St. Louis and Kansas City.

An alternative to simultaneous desegregation is the grade-a-year system, now in its third year of operation in Nashville, Tennessee, where, following redistricting, a city-wide change began with the first grade and will be completed over a 12-year period.

But where pupil-placement plans have been adopted, as in Virginia, the transition to desegregation will be slower, more localized and so likelier to serve as a model for the Deep South. Seven other states – Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Louisiana, North Carolina, Tennessee and Texas – have similar pupil-placement laws, empowering a public body, usually a school board, to assign pupils to schools on the basis of factors other than race (such as distance between school and residence, crowding, the possibility of disorder, health and morals, scholastic aptitude). Mississippi and South Carolina have statutes on their books which essentially serve the same purpose. Georgia alone recognizes no possibility of compromise; in this, it resembles Virginia a year ago. But the Atlanta school board, under court order to submit a plan for desegregation early in 1960, has recently proposed a pupil placement plan under which the board would apply 18 criteria for determining what child goes where; it would also permit an appeal of its decision to the state board of education.

All placement systems put on the parents of the child desiring a transfer the burden of applying to the placement authority, which then applies specified criteria. In the course of time, these assignment laws are sure to be attacked by the NAACP and others on the grounds that in actuality they assume the maintenance of a dual school system, with exceptions, and that under them no terminal date for the completion of desegregation can be set. But so far, the Supreme Court has shown every willingness to uphold these statutes: in 1957 it refused to review a decision of a Federal Court of Appeals approving the requirement that Negro children use North Carolina's pupil placement procedure and found the act constitutional on its face; in 1958 it upheld the Alabama law, and in 1959, the Arkansas law.

In sustaining such statutes the Court has indicated, however, that it will follow closely the administrative practices developed under them, and in Virginia a few challenges have already arisen: a lower court has disallowed use of the existing class median – instead of the total range of pupil's scores – as a yardstick for admissions based on intelligence tests. The Court also seems likely to maintain the doctrine developed in the Hoxie, Arkansas, case, which recognizes the right of school boards to request and receive federal court protection while attempting to carry out the Court mandate. (In Hoxie and in Clinton, Tennessee, school boards asked for federal assistance when violence was threatened.)

Accommodation or Evasion?

But although the Supreme Court has been inclined to let the findings of lower courts stand and to sustain policies of gradualness, in Prince Edward County in Virginia, the scene of one of the original school cases, the opposite has been true. In 1958 a federal district judge gave this low-income, Black Belt area 10 years in which to plan to desegregate; the appellate court reversed his decision, ordering a start to be made now; the Supreme Court this October declined to review the reversal. The county authorities thereupon eliminated the entire public school system. Education of white children is being attempted locally under private auspices. No local educational facilities exist for Negroes.

The "freedom of choice" section of the new Virginia law envisages an expansion of private schools in difficult areas, with tuition grants made to parents desiring them. State grants, however, represent only the equivalent of the annual public per capita expenditures for education; they include no funds for new buildings or equipment. After soul-searching by local churches, some permissions have been given, others withheld, for the use of Sunday school buildings during the week; private

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homes, basements, garages also are used as classrooms. But teachers in such a system lack not only tenure and pensions but current security, and most extracurricular attractions are out for the duration. In Charlottesville, private schooling is being offered, but enrollment at the two public schools that were closed last year and are now operating on a desegregated basis fell by less than 250 out of 1,410 this September. Moreover, upholding a principle is easier than raising a budget. Charlottesville's city manager has announced that while an existing surplus can be drawn upon for this year's tuition grants, next year a tax increase will be required to cover them; the news struck Main Street the same week that its merchants were being solicited for voluntary contributions to the private school budget.

"We Must Face Reality"

The forces that have made for change in Virginia, and that will exert leverage also in the Deep South, are of two sorts. There are the parents who would greatly prefer segregated schools but who prefer desegregated schools to desultory private efforts or no schools at all. And there are industrialists, among them the managers of the branch plants of national corporations that have brought new prosperity since the war to formerly low-income rural areas, who are concerned lest they lose the trained personnel without which they cannot operate – personnel which is aware that it can easily find jobs in parts of the country where public schooling is a certainty. Last year, at the Virginia Parent-Teachers Association's annual meeting, support for the public schools balanced on a knife-edge. This year, segregationist proposals were voted down easily, and, participating in a panel discussion, the manager of a General Electric branch plant with a $5 million payroll and a vice president of the Norfolk and Western Railway declared, in the words of the latter, "We are unwilling to return to the days of washtubs in the cellar and a 60-hour week at the plant. We know that we cannot survive as an illiterate island in a literate world."

Meanwhile at Asheville, North Carolina, Virginia's Governor Almond was being chosen – and Governor Faubus of Arkansas passed over – as next year's chairman of the Southern Governors Conference. It was more than an expression of preference for one personality as against another. The South, it is now clear, may fight limited wars, but massive retaliation against desegregation has been repudiated. In accepting, Mr. Almond said that the South must either allow some integration or close its public schools. "It seemed we must face reality," the Governor said, and then went on to prophesy "unending growth and prosperity for the South" and to declare, as one who has never bolted the Democratic Party, that Virginia will not go to next year's national convention "with a chip on our shoulder."

Illinois Politics

Time was when a Big City Boss was considered a poor prospect as candidate for state-wide office in the Midwest. Heavy urbanization in recent years is changing that, however, and the mayor of Chicago is weighing the possibility that the urbanites and suburbanites may already be able to outvote the farmers in Illinois – in which case he might become the state's next Governor.

All the signs indicate that Mayor Richard J. Daley, who as chairman of the Cook County Democratic Central Committee is "boss" of his party in Illinois and has been a good mayor, as Chicago mayors go, aspires to the State House. In casual conversations Daley tells friends of the pressures being put on him to run for Governor; he has also failed to indicate a preference among a host of other aspirants for the Democratic nomination. In Illinois the sheer weight of the Cook County vote controls Democratic primaries and as a result, by custom, slate-making by the bosses has replaced the open primary. A Chicago lawyer and the able and independent former Democratic National Chairman, Stephen A. Mitchell, has spent the last four years challenging this kind of machine control and has already announced his candidacy for Governor on the Democratic ticket, regardless of who is picked for the primary slate. But short of a voters' revolt, Daley can have the Democratic nomination for the asking.

Bound up in the asking, however, is more than the calculation of whether he could ride out the storm his opposition – probably Governor William Stratton again – would kick up in the Corn and Bible Belt about a big city drive to take over the state. Could Daley go off to Springfield and still retain his power in Chicago? Can he find a suitable pro-consul to serve as mayor and/or Cook County Democratic chairman who will not grow too ambitious? And would the "boys" behave while he was in Springfield?

Daley's decision, moreover, has political significance outside Illinois. Daley is Catholic. He has never said so, but it is understood he might swing to Senator Kennedy in the national convention and take a lot of votes with him. But if he decides to run for Governor, he is too astute a politician to believe that a Catholic as a gubernatorial nominee, and a Catholic as a Presidential nominee, would be good politics in Illinois. If Daley announces he's going to seek the Governorship Senator Kennedy can kiss a lot of "deliverable" Illinois convention votes goodby. Senator Symington, most people believe, would be the beneficiary of any switch from Kennedy.

Involved also is Republican Governor Stratton's reelection. To win his own third term over Daley or whomever and be in position to be considered for Vice President on either a Nixon or Rockefeller ticket, Stratton – who barely beat a Democratic unknown by 33,000 votes last time – needs the help of a Senatorial running mate

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who will get out a large Republican vote. But there are few such seekers of the honor of tangling with the solidly entrenched and highly regarded Paul Douglas, who has no opposition to date for renomination, and it is estimated that he is 200,000-250,000 votes stronger than his party. It would take a Republican sweep of 300,000 or more to jeopardize Douglas, who has shaken every hand in Illinois (except those along LaSalle Street, the Wall Street of Chicago) at least 10 times and is now kissing the grandchildren of little ones he kissed in his first campaign.

The Price of Drugs

Since the Senate Anti-Monopoly Subcommittee announced an investigation of drug prices to begin December 7, it has been deluged with congratulatory mail from people resentful of the present high cost of medicines. Old people suffering from arthritis write about the difficulties of getting by on $60-70 monthly from social security when the 3-5 Cortizone pills prescribed each day cost 30 cents apiece, or more than $30 per month. The story is the same for many minor as well as serious ailments. The consumer drug bill is more than $3 billion a year at retail, the greater part for ethical drugs sold by prescription.

Drug manufacturers explain that the race to develop new drugs requires heavy spending both for research and for promotion of new products. But there is no denying that prices for prescription drugs and drug industry profits are high. The Kefauver Subcommittee will inquire into whether drug prices are unreasonable (Is it necessary for the 30 cent Cortizone pill to cost the druggist 18 cents?), and whether the high pressure advertising promotion of new drugs aimed at doctors is warranted by the products themselves.

Some countries prohibit the granting of patents on drugs entirely. Others require strict licensing of their manufacture. Hopefully, the coming hearings will indicate a need here for legislation requiring licenses for drug manufacture on a reasonable royalty basis and advance justification for any upward shift in prices.

More and More People

The autumn issue of the *Ecumenical Review*, quarterly journal of the World Council of Churches, presents some interesting findings in "Responsible Parenthood and the Population Problem." Twenty-one Protestant, Anglican and Orthodox churchmen, physicians, and students of family and international affairs, met last April at Mansfield College, Oxford, to review recent church statements on family limitation, and while the Orthodox member maintained his church's position that marital abstinence is the only allowable means of birth control, the group as a whole held that recent advances in medical knowledge give husband and wife responsibility to use this knowledge in Christian conscience "in relation to the procreation and nurture of children." Significantly, the study was undertaken at the joint request of officers of the International Missionary Council and the World Council of Churches, galvanized by the "social, political, economic and even religious repercussions" of the worldwide increase of 50 million people a year.

The seriousness of the pressure on resources in the most densely populated regions of the world is underscored in the report on "Population Trends and Related Problems of Economic Development," prepared by the UN Economic Committee for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE) and released this midsummer. If present growth trends continue, the population of this area will double in 30 years and will then equal the world's entire population today. Some billion and a half people live in Asia and the Far East now; some 2.3 billion will live there by 1975, and some 3.7 billion by the year 2000 unless something is done to change the trend.

What chance is there of doing so? The November, 1959, *Population Bulletin* notes that in three of the major countries, mainland China, India and Japan, there have been efforts to control population growth – sporadic or sustained. In China, whose current population tops the half-billion mark, the Marxian line that no nation can have too many workers was briefly in abeyance in the mid-50's; but manpower shortage is now ranked high among obstacles to the "new leap forward." In various parts of India, sterilization has been legalized and some clinics established, but only the barest beginnings have been made. In Japan, however, where roughly 92 million people live on land the size of Montana, the birth rate has been brought under control through legalization of abortion on the grounds of health (with economic welfare regarded as a component of health), the spread of contraceptive information and sterilization.

Still, if some religious bodies are urging consideration of how to relate population to resources in such a way as to permit standards of living to rise, others hold to contrary positions. The October journal of the Holy Name Society maintains: "Unless there are some surprising changes in birth rates or marked shifts in immigration policy – neither likely – sooner or later Catholics will be the numerically dominating group of citizens in the United States. . . . The country needs new citizens. The responsibilities of the United States to the whole world cannot be carried out without a large population. . . . The proudest mark of a Catholic should be that he is privileged to cooperate materially in God's plan of peopling Heaven. Artificial birth control will be on the wane when those outside the Church come to an appreciation of all that it means to be marked as the parent of a large family."

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Controlling Air Traffic

Like the world's population, air traffic in the US is not simply growing – it is exploding. In the last 20 years annual flight operations have increased from five million to 65 million take-offs and landings. From fewer than two million persons in 1940 the number of airlines passengers has grown to 50 million in 1958. Planes now total some 109,000 – 2,000 commercial airliners, 42,000 military planes and 65,000 scattered among small businessmen, farmers and other private owners.

Twenty years ago few of the nation's 22,000 planes flew faster than 150 miles per hour. Today commercial jet transports cross the country at cruising speeds that average 590 mph. The simple principle of "see and be seen" that once was enough, except in bad weather, to prevent mid-air collision is no longer applicable. When a jet pilot sees another jet approaching on the same course, it is already too late for either to act.

All of this has imposed an enormous strain on an obsolescent national air traffic control system. Until just last year, the Civil Aeronautics Administration had remained – as Sen. Mike Monroney put it – "in the cellar at Commerce." The system is still, basically, a manual one. Flight progress "strips" are written and posted by hand; traffic controllers still must communicate by voice with other control centers and with individual pilots. In the midst of endless and repetitious clerical detail, controllers also must analyze flight plans, direct traffic and anticipate difficulties.

The best guarantee of safety has been to keep planes wide apart in space and time, which has often led to delayed arrivals and departures and traffic jams over airports. Now, long-range radar is belatedly being installed, permitting an increased number of planes to fly safely within a given area. Three "Super Skyways" connect Washington and New York with Los Angeles and San Francisco, and no plane may use or cross these air corridors, which extend from 17,000 to 22,000 feet, without specific permission from a traffic control center.

As recently as November 17, James T. Pyle, Deputy Administrator of the new Federal Aviation Agency created by the long-overdue Aviation Act of 1958 announced the scheduled December delivery of the first giant computer for handling air traffic. Known as Data Processing Central, the computer system will be operating by 1963 in New York City and shortly thereafter in Chicago, Los Angeles, Washington and Miami.

According to Pyle, the new system will be able to print and process 1,600 flight progress strips, process 400 flight plans and store another 1,000 every 60 minutes. It will be able to detect and predict conflicts in the air up to 30 minutes in advance of the oncoming trouble.

It seems no time ago that there were 75 inter-agency committees, boards and panels in the government trying to cope with the needs and demands of the military, the commercial airlines and the small-plane owners. Until the 1958 Act, the CAA had pleaded without success for more equipment, more facilities and more personnel to manage air traffic. Secretaries of Commerce regularly cut CAA requests by a half and more before sending them on to the Bureau of the Budget.

Perhaps it is not surprising that in all this confusion two separate, incompatible and costly systems of air navigation and traffic control were developing side-by-side – one for civil planes (VOR/DME) and another for the military (TACAN). The 1958 Act makes certain that all air traffic and air space in the future will come under a single, independent authority. The Act gives the FAA control over the operations of all aircraft. All are governed by FAA safety regulations, and the agency is working to develop a common air traffic system.

A serious controversy is developing, however, over military demands that all FAA air traffic controllers be placed under quasi-military regulations in the new integrated set up. Under a plan that may be recommended in the President's January legislative message to Congress, controllers would have to give up their right to decide where they want to work. If they do not like where they are assigned, they would be free to quit only after six months. The military officers who will work under FAA authority are used to such stringency, but not the civilians who will work beside them.

FAA officials are believed to be sharply divided in this dispute – with many who agree on the need for quasi-militarization of controllers in time of war objecting to this practice in peacetime. The professional society of the air traffic controllers is among the objectors. But the Defense Department holds that the plan is essential to stability of operations in its 2000-odd bases in this country and around the world. Traffic facilities at these bases will be transferred to FAA control once the problem of FAA personnel policy is settled.

Whether this is the best way, or the only way, to protect national security while respecting the job rights of civilian federal employees is open to question. In any case the FAA's ability to unite civilian and military leadership in an effective system is of great concern to more than the affected 30,000 or 40,000 air traffic controllers.

Riots in Panama

After four hours of rioting, with Canal Zone police using clubs, tear gas and high pressure hoses, US troops finally had to take over the guarding of the Zone's borders in the anti-American demonstrations in Panama four weeks ago. Mr. Eisenhower found the outbreak "a little bit puzzling" and probably the work of "extremists." But last week again, a mob stoned US guards; 30 persons were injured in a five-hour riot. We must anticipate the possibility, if not probability, that in the

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not too distant future the *status quo* can be maintained only by outright military force.

It is likewise foreseeable that some country, perhaps Panama itself, will ask that the Canal be placed under an international or Latin American or Inter-American administration. Such solutions have been recommended by Latin American leaders since 1924, and they have been given new force by the general trend toward unification in Latin America. An Inter-American Bank for Development has just been established. Within a few years a Latin American Common Market will have come into being, and serious discussions are now taking place on some kind of consolidation of military forces throughout the Southern hemisphere.

Surely the State Department would be wise to accommodate itself to this trend. It could do so in few ways more pleasing to Latin America than by proposing a new, multilateral arrangement for the operation of the Canal that would satisfy our military needs as well as the continental aspiration of our "good neighbors," to share responsibility for operation of this all-American waterway. But the initiative should come willingly from Washington, rather than as a reluctant response to ever-stronger pressures.

THE ALGERIAN DEBATE IN THE UN

On the Verge of Reconciliation

by Jean Daniel

PARIS – *November 20*

I was in Tunis yesterday talking with ministers of the Algerian Government-in-Exile. Today, in Paris, I talked with a minister of General de Gaulle's Government. Never has the dialogue of the deaf seemed so dramatic, with each side having the best intentions in the world. The most recent event has been the answer of the Algerian rebels – the FLN – to de Gaulle's November 10th press conference. This answer neither accepts General de Gaulle's offer nor requests clarification of that offer. It lays down a procedure for negotiation which from the French view is inapplicable now. It disappoints international expectations, and in particular the hopes of the Americans and the Russians who, for the first time, agree on the realism of the Algerian policy of the head of the French state. The situation has therefore been greatly worsened at the precise moment when it seemed possible to hope for a solution.

What has happened? In general, there is only one essential and determining reason for the Algerian attitude: discussions at the United Nations. In early December a new debate in the UN on Algeria is likely once again to put France on the spot – and this will follow the surprisingly hostile UN vote in November, calling upon France not to explode its bomb in the Sahara. The Afro-Asian groups, taking the statements of de Gaulle and of the Algerian Government, now appear to imagine that they can facilitate an Algerian-French agreement for self-determination, and to this end they propose to invite the two parties to discussions if not to actual negotiations. This Afro-Asian initiative, clever and unassailable in appearance since in substance it congratulates the two disputing parties, embarrasses France's friends. How is it possible to take exception to a text which merely inventories the points in common between France and the FLN? Above all how can such an initiative be rejected, especially if France refuses to open the Algerian dossier and refuses to defend a position which might be supported by the delegations eventually on the French side?

The United States, for its part, has often called this point to the attention of the French. Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge has affirmed vigorously that he could support France only if France accepted debate in the UN. But Ambassadors Armand Berard and Herve Alphand have up until now been instructed to deny the competence of the United Nations in this matter and to abstain from any discussions which constitute interference in the domestic affairs of France.

These instructions were valid, however, only so long as General de Gaulle, in common with the United States, the Russians and a certain number of Latin American states, thought that UN discussions on Algeria could be adjourned by reason of the prospect of direct talks between the FLN and France. Since such an adjournment of the debate now seems impossible, will French diplomacy maintain its same attitude? Unfortunately, that is quite possible. And that is why it is to be expected that General de Gaulle will find his task of reconciliation complicated; his political calendar has been upset.

The reasons why the FLN chose to turn over its battle

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to the United Nations have to be examined. Two principal motives can be discerned and, as will be seen, they both stem from the same root. The first motive is the desire of the Algerian Government of the FLN to be sure, on the one hand, of General de Gaulle's intention to link a cease-fire with guarantees supporting the procedure of self-determination; and, on the other hand, to be sure that General de Gaulle will be obeyed completely – if he so desires – by French officials who talk a language different from his. The remarks of Marshal Juin, of General Weygand, of the Minister of the Army and of the Delegate General of France in Algeria, have robbed self-determination of the meaning General de Gaulle gave it on September 16th. No doubt de Gaulle on November 10th restored the term's true significance, but no clear and explicit disavowal has been made in regard to the members of his government who talked of self-determination as if it were an astute political stroke. The FLN, however, could have asked for clarification; it could have sent a secret emissary who could have raised questions preliminary to any discussions. Here, we reach the second FLN motive.

Up to now, France has worked to split the insurrection; it counted at first on destroying it, then on dispersing it. France did not succeed in striking at the soul of the rebellion, but it was able (helped by the intermittent errors of the FLN itself) to divide Algeria, to transform a colonial war into a civil war, to produce all the heart-rending convulsions which a military occupation produces in any country. For this reason the FLN Government considers it necessary to take every possible precaution, to cover itself with every surety, to obtain every possible and imaginable guarantee before risking, by discussions, the impression to the Algerian masses that the flame of insurrection is dying out, that tension is being relaxed, and that Moslem or European adversaries may have an authority equal to the FLN's.

It has often been pointed out that there are certain similarities between the Chinese and Algerian revolutions. That is only partly true, but it is true that among the Algerians, as among the Chinese, the insurrection began with the peasant masses, on which agitators later managed to impose a military structure. War, combat, tension and the pursuit of a simple objective to which one sacrifices everything can cement such a revolution much better than can a peaceful organization led by men who do not yet have a well-formed political consciousness. The leaders of the Algerian revolution are well aware of this. The Algerian national consciousness was created during the last five years of war; peace is full of risks for the revolution. Therefore, before returning to peace, the unshakable basis of a political settlement must have been established. Otherwise, the FLN and the revolution are imperiled.

In this state of mind, the Algerians give enormous importance to all questions of prestige, of national and revolutionary pride. They will not agree to act through the Ambassadors of Tunisia and Morocco, to receive nonauthorized emissaries, to come to Paris without preliminary discussions, to be treated as isolated individuals whom one expects to bring, even temporarily, within the bosom of the French Republic through one man's promise to construct a future more or less in accord with the FLN's initial goals. They must show the Algerian masses that the power and integrity of the revolution will not be impaired, and that those who have remained outside the revolution are wrong to count on the disappearance of the FLN. For the Algerians, peace counts less than the Revolution, a cease-fire is less important than independence, and, finally, the association with France is less desirable, despite the promised economic prosperity, than the protection of the revolutionary goals.

These two motives clearly show why the Algerians may not wish to yield to the invitation of the chief of the enemy camp – regardless of how much prestige he may have – but prefer instead yielding to the recommendation of an international organization. To make concessions to the United Nations is to have already gained a recognition of one's authority and a consecration of one's prestige.

But what about the heart of the problem? Has a single step been taken toward peace? I do not believe so. If the French delegation does not receive instructions to put a good face on a United Nations recommendation on Algeria and present such a recommendation as a French success, General de Gaulle will be annoyed, and to no one's profit – not even the FLN's. The President of the French Republic is at this moment the only man capable of solving the Algerian problem; and he is also the only man to whom the FLN has a chance of making itself understood. On September 16th General de Gaulle came out in favor of self-determination; he did so against his own government, against the parliament, against the largest political party in France. The army, which had been so agitated, remained silent, peaceful and obedient. Now, if the linking of the *ultras* of France and the FLN were to cause the failure of the Gaullist experiment by prolonging the Algerian war, not only would the war continue indefinitely but France and Algeria would undergo a catastrophic experience. Nameless and obscure peoples would be the real victims.

That is why it is to be hoped that the allies of France and of the Algerians at the United Nations will take into account the internal situations of the two countries, will reconcile points of view in the corridors rather than in the public galleries, will give the Algerians great enough confidence in themselves so that they may be able to take political risks, and will get from the French an understanding of the difficulties with which de Gaulle must contend. The situation is grave not only for France and the Algerians; it is grave also for the stability of Europe and the Atlantic community.

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THE FACTS ABOUT NIXON – X

From the story of Nixon-the-campaigner, we turn to Nixon-the-public-servant. First elected to the House of Representatives in 1946 as the chosen instrument of California conservatives to unseat incumbent Jerry Voorhis, Nixon took an early interest in measures to limit the power of labor unions and legislation for dealing with Communist subversion. The Mundt-Nixon bill brought him some notice, but it was his role in the Hiss case that made him a national celebrity within a few weeks.

The Hiss Case

by William Costello

Time: January 3, 1947.
Setting: The Republican cloakroom in the House of Representatives.

New members waiting to take the oath were milling about striking up acquaintances, mentally fitting themselves into their new roles. A newspaperman stepping up to one of the freshman legislators asked the stock question: "Do you have any bill you plan to introduce, or any pet project you intend to push for?"

The young Congressman pursed his lips and smiled. "No, nothing in particular," he replied modestly. "I was elected to smash the labor bosses, and my one principle is to accept no dictation from the CIO-PAC."

The Congressman of course was 33-year-old Richard Nixon, fresh from his triumph over Jerry Voorhis, ideologically flexing himself for a career of public service. During the four years of that service in the House Nixon was to be identified with three causes:

1. Enactment of the Taft-Hartley Act of 1947, to which he devoted his principal energies in his first term.
2. The Mundt-Nixon bill, most of the provisions of which were embodied in the McCarran Act.
3. The Hiss case.

Almost from the start Nixon showed a grasp of the opportunistic art of working on one side of the fence while a bill was being amended and perfected, and then switching to the other side or being conveniently absent when the measure came to a final vote. Among professionals this is considered vintage politics, a technique hoary with respectability, the only pragmatic answer to the opposition in districts where the turnover of Congressmen tends to be high. By a careful distribution of votes and speeches on sensitive issues, it is possible to be on all sides simultaneously and thus relatively immune from partisan attack. The ethics of the system is a separate problem, usually disposed of by professionals with a shrug and a wink.

Early in his House career, Nixon was referred to by a Washington newspaper as "the greenest Congressman in town." In the light of what happened, it would have been safer to reserve judgment. Nixon showed, in fact, a rare insight into the manipulation of power. One of his first and shrewdest moves was to help organize the Chowder and Marching Club, a group of 14 freshman Republicans who met every Wednesday for strategy conferences on bills, hearings, reports and amendments.

As a bloc the freshman marchers were big enough to command a degree of attention which would not have been accorded them as individuals; at the same time they were not big enough to excite hostility or reprisals. They provided each other with a degree of protective coloration, and gave Nixon as their leader a base of operations and a first tentative step upward on the ladder of Congressional influence. Without such a base of operations, Nixon and his associates as individuals might easily have been lost in the remote upper corridors of the House Office Building, ignored in committee assignments and steamrollered into impotence by the complex machinery of the House and its seniority system.

In view of Nixon's interest in "smashing the labor bosses" and his success with the Communist subversion issue in the 1946 campaign, he was especially fortunate in his committee assignments. Although only a freshman, Nixon applied for and got a place on the House Education and Labor Committee. In addition he was eligible for assignment to a minor committee; and although the Committee on Un-American Activities had been established since 1945 as a permanent standing committee, it was still regarded as a lesser post.

Because of the committee's unsavory reputation Nixon is said to have hesitated about accepting a place on it. His fellow member of the Chowder and Marching Club, Donald Jackson, recalled that Nixon paced up and down his office weighing the decision, arguing on the one hand that it was an unpleasant, thankless assignment, that it might be politically the kiss of death, but that on the other hand it might be possible to correct the injustices and irresponsibilities in the committee's pro-

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cedures and that therefore he might be under a moral obligation to undertake the assignment.

This picture of a man wrestling with his conscience is accepted with reservations by practical politicians. House committee assignments for the most part are made in response to an expression of preference. The Un-American Activities Committee at that time was an unrivaled forum for personal publicity and there were more Republican applicants than there were openings. For an almost unknown freshman to get such a plum could only mean that powerful influence had been exerted on his behalf.

For 10 years the Un-American Activities Committee had been an investigatory body and nothing more. It had produced no legislative recommendations whatever. It was Nixon who transformed the committee into a functioning legislative organism. He began late in 1947 by winning appointment as chairman of a special legislative subcommittee. He then proceeded to hold a series of hearings in February, compiled two monographs on Communist operational tactics from the committee's voluminous files, and drafted a report outlining a proposed new attack on the Red conspiracy.

Mundt-Nixon Bill

Shortly afterward the Mundt-Nixon bill was introduced. Its principal provisions included: registration of Communists, identification of the sources of all printed and broadcast material issued by Communist-front organizations; denial of passports to party members; denial of federal employment to members of the Communist Party; discontinuance of tax-exemption of Communist-front organizations; deportation proceedings against aliens convicted of Communist activity; increasing the penalty for peacetime espionage to a $10,000 fine and a maximum of 10 years' imprisonment; creation of a subversive activities control board which upon application by the Attorney General would determine whether an organization was a Communist-front or Communist-action group.

In the eyes of traditionalists the bill was offensive on two general grounds. The first of these was that it represented little more than a digest of the views of a small nine-man committee and had been sent to the floor of the House without hearings, without thorough analysis by either federal officials or outside legal experts. The second objection was that the bill undertook to regulate not conduct but opinion and therefore represented an unconstitutional species of thought-control.

Although opponents contended there was already ample legislation for prosecuting Reds, the Mundt-Nixon bill was reported out of committee unanimously. Nixon had been appointed floor manager for the bill, and in the absence of a Democrat willing to head the opposition, that task devolved upon New York's Marcantonio, who was notorious for his sympathies to the Communists.

In the three-day debate that followed, Nixon's House apprenticeship came to an end. A reading of the *Congressional Record* indicates he handled himself with the aplomb of a veteran. He followed the debate; he interjected a word of interpretation here, of explanation there. He was the committee member who answered the toughest charges of the opposition; he was the committee member who knew the bill to its finest detail. He treated Marcantonio courteously, even granting him extra time when the hour and a half allocated to the New Yorker ran out. He never became involved in acrimonious exchanges. He was sharp on occasion, but always to the end that the House avoid irrelevancies.

On the second day of debate, the Mundt-Nixon forces suffered a setback from an unexpected quarter, a setback which not only contributed to subsequent failure of the bill in the Senate but which was to have a series of ironic overtones. In the preconvention maneuvering of 1948, Dewey and Stassen had emerged as the principal GOP antagonists, and the paramount issue was whether to deal with the problem of Communist subversion by outlawing the Communist Party. On May 15, in a meeting that proved to be the turning point in the struggle, Stassen and Dewey debated the issue in Portland, Oregon. In preparation for that debate, and knowing that while Dewey opposed the Mundt-Nixon bill Stassen favored it, Nixon had prepared a concise de-

May '48

"We Got To Burn the Evil Spirits Out of Her."

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fense of the bill which Stassen in the end failed to use. Dewey, however, in his fiery defense of civil liberties and freedom of speech, pointed a finger of scorn at the Mundt-Nixon bill, declaring: "Stripped to its naked essential, this is nothing but the method of Hitler and Stalin. It is thought-control borrowed from the Japanese. It is an attempt to beat down ideas with a club. It is surrender of everything we believe in."

Leading newspapers in all parts of the country joined in Dewey's protest. The *New York Times* predicted that the bill "could be used to impose restraints on freedom such as the American people have not known for 150 years." The *Denver Post* wrote that the bill "would work against many innocent persons." The *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* said it "could be used to harass and even to prosecute any nonconforming individual or group."

In the Senate the Mundt-Nixon bill was referred to the Judiciary Committee which in June, 1948, did take the trouble to order a series of hearings. By that time protests against the measure had become so vociferous that proponents were unable to round up enough votes to report it out of committee.

Two years later, on March 7, 1950 – barely two weeks after the Wheeling, West Virginia, speech that launched Joe McCarthy on his demagogic crusade – the Mundt-Nixon bill was resuscitated. By then, however, Nixon no longer had the field to himself. There were similar measures by Mundt, Ferguson and McCarran in the Senate and by Wood of Georgia in the House. In the prevailing anti-Communist neurosis, few politicians dared vote against such a proposal in an election year; and when McCarran threw the weight of his power into the scales, Congress rammed through, despite Truman's veto, an omnibus control bill under the title of the McCarran Act that included not only most of Nixon's ideas but a tangle of provisos from other pending measures.

Nixon's defense of the bill in his 1950 campaign manual started from the premise that, while it would have been a mistake to outlaw the Communist Party and drive it underground, the statute finally adopted would render Communism harmless by requiring the movement to operate in the open. "The Communist Party," he said, "can't stand the light of day." He insisted the bill "carefully defines the organizations which must register," and said the act would "take the procedure of identifying Communists and Communist-front organizations out of the field of name-calling and remove all uncertainty as to the organization's true nature by taking the procedure into the realm of legislative standards."

Notwithstanding this confident prediction, efforts to enforce the McCarran Act left a trail of frustration. In its 1958 summary to Congress and the President, the Subversive Activities Control Board reported itself still hamstrung by litigation. In eight years the Attorney General had brought 24 cases before the board. At his own request eight of these were eventually dismissed because the organizations had ceased to exist. Eight other respondents had been ordered by the board, after hearings, to register as Communist-front organizations, but all had appealed the ruling to the District of Columbia Court of Appeals.

Eight other cases were still before the board. These included five on which hearings had been completed but no decisions had been filed, and two cases of "Communist-infiltrated labor unions" on which no action had been taken. The twenty-fourth case – that against the Communist Party of the United States – had been remanded once by the Supreme Court and twice by the Court of Appeals for further consideration. Unless and until the Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the act requiring the Communist Party to register, enforcement of the statute was at a standstill, since under the act no organization could be compelled to register until all opportunities for appeal had been exhausted.

Thus after eight years of litigation, no order of the SACB had become final. Ambiguities in the act trod so narrowly on the Bill of Rights as to open the door to a paralyzing parade of lawsuits. SACB officials took comfort in the thought that juridical harassment of the Red conspiracy had effectually tied up much of the party's funds and manpower; but from the point of view of general public policy, the McCarran Act of 1950 scarcely measured up to the hopes of its sponsors.

The Hiss Case

Politically the climax of Nixon's career in the House was the Alger Hiss affair, the only dramatic and widely meaningful case in a decade of investigation by Congress. In the short space of 134 days between August 3 and December 15, 1948, Nixon's name rocketed into the headlines; and as two Hiss perjury trials dragged through the courts in 1949 with sensation following sensation, the Californian became a national celebrity.

During the late summer of 1948, an American airlift fighting the Berlin blockade held the center of the world stage as Western diplomats conferred anxiously with the Russians in Moscow to try to reopen the overland corridors. Harry Truman was preparing for his apparently hopeless campaign battle against Tom Dewey and the Eightieth Congress. The Un-American Activities Committee, having failed to put the Mundt-Nixon bill on the statute books, found its fortunes at a low ebb.

At that juncture a new and provocative line of inquiry opened up. The committee on July 31 questioned Elizabeth Bentley, a confessed ex-Communist spy, who had not only testified before a New York grand jury and before a Senate subcommittee, but had actually told her story to the world in a series of newspaper articles. Her warmed-over report of spy rings that had infiltrated the federal government named names and was successful in

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making headlines. The committee was thereby encouraged to call another ex-Communist, Whittaker Chambers, who had been trying for years with indifferent success to convince Washington authorities that Communism in government was a real and present danger.

The Hiss case had its origin in the testimony Chambers gave at a committee hearing August 3. The committee already had material on Hiss in its files, raw, unevaluated data that added up to nothing until Chambers came along. Nixon recalled later that the witness "made charges which at the time seemed fantastic – that he'd been a Communist, that he had worked with Hiss, White, Abt, Pressman, Witt and a number of other people who were also connected with the government." Hiss, who had served briefly in the State Department during the New Deal and had since become president of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, promptly denied Chambers' charges and demanded an opportunity to be heard. He came before the committee August 5 and denied all.

"He was an amazingly impressive witness the first time," Nixon said later. "I would say that 90 percent of those who were in the committee room were convinced that Mr. Hiss was telling the truth . . . when he said that he did not know Mr. Chambers."

At that point the case was almost dropped. Chambers was a man of considerable standing, one of six senior editors of *Time* magazine; but Hiss had had a phenomenal record in government service and came before the committee, not a confessed Communist like Chambers, but a man of redoubtable credentials. Nixon however took the lead in urging further investigation. Later to explain his hunch he called attention to a few lines of testimony that had seemed to strike a false note.

Q. – "You say you have never seen Mr. Chambers?"

A. – "The name means absolutely nothing to me, Mr. Stripling."

A mind trained in courtroom procedure and cross-examination could perceive that Hiss was not answering the question.

"I was a lawyer," Nixon said, "and I knew he was a lawyer and I felt that his testimony was just too slick. . . . As I read the testimony later I became convinced that if Hiss was lying he was lying in such a way as to avoid perjury, with a very careful use of phrasing. He never made a categorical statement. He would say, 'To the best of my recollection' over and over again. He never said, 'I have never known Whittaker Chambers'. He constantly reiterated when the question was put to him, 'I have never known a man by the name of Whittaker Chambers'. In other words, he was too careful in his testimony, too smooth. It was very possibly an act, it seemed to me."

Nixon proceeded cautiously. Together with Rep. Charles J. Kersten, he went to see John Foster Dulles, then candidate Tom Dewey's foreign policy adviser. Present also at the Roosevelt Hotel interview in New York were Allen Dulles, Christian Herter and C. Douglas Dillon. It was the elder Dulles who in the end, after a long analysis, agreed that the weight of evidence against Hiss called for further investigation. Dulles reached that decision reluctantly, for on December 26, 1946, in response to an offer of a Detroit lawyer to provide evidence that Hiss had a Communist record, Dulles had written, "I have heard the report you refer to, but I have confidence that there is no reason to doubt Mr. Hiss's complete loyalty to our American institutions. . . . I feel a little skeptical about information which seems inconsistent with all that I personally know and what is the judgment of reliable friends and associates in Washington."

The question raised by Hiss's carefully qualified answers was, of course, whether he might have known Chambers under another name. In the end that suspicion proved to be the key that unraveled the mystery. Nixon, having been appointed chairman of a special subcommittee to pursue the investigation, proceeded to question Chambers separately about a multitude of intimate personal details concerning his alleged friendship with Hiss between 1934 and 1938. He then cross-examined

WHICH NIXON DO YOU READ?

Philadelphia, Pa. – *Vice President Richard M. Nixon declared tonight that Adlai E. Stevenson's proposal for suspending H-bomb tests is "catastrophic nonsense" that will "shake the confidence of our friends abroad." Nixon said, "for us to agree as Mr. Stevenson suggests to discontinue tests before we have a fool-proof inspection system would be just like playing Russian roulette with only the Russians knowing which chamber had the fatal bullet in it."* – Washington Post, Oct. 4, 1956.

Wisconsin Rapids, Wis. – *Vice President Richard M. Nixon said tonight that anyone urging a resumption of nuclear weapon testing was ignorant of the facts. . . . "I would not criticize the critics," Mr. Nixon told a news conference. "I am simply saying that when you are on the outside looking in without responsibility and don't know all of the facts involved, you can very well reach an opinion you should not reach if you had all the facts."* – New York Times, Nov. 12, 1959.

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Hiss on this mass of corroborative detail. When answers coincided and when Hiss began dropping intimations that he might indeed have known Chambers by another name (eventually he was to identify Chambers both as "Carl" and as "George Crosley," a deadbeat free-lance writer whom he had allegedly befriended) Nixon arranged for a confrontation which took place August 16 in the Commodore Hotel in New York City.

At that meeting, in a melodramatic performance in which he displayed an almost comic reluctance in finally identifying Chambers, Hiss stuck to his denial that he had been a Communist and challenged Chambers to repeat the accusation outside the committee chamber where he could be sued for libel. Chambers did repeat the charges August 27 on the radio program *Meet the Press*. After a delay of three weeks, a delay which in itself tended to raise doubts about Hiss's candor, the suit against Chambers was filed.

In the end it was this lawsuit rather than the committee investigation as such that sent Hiss to jail. Hiss had assured his attorneys that there were no incriminating papers or documents that could possibly be produced against him. His attorneys therefore, in taking a deposition November 17 from Chambers, felt safe in asking the latter to produce any documentary evidence he might have to support his charge that he and Hiss had been Communists together.

Prior to that no one had known that Chambers in quitting the Communist Party had taken the precaution to fashion a "life preserver." Counsel for Hiss, therefore, was thunderstruck when Chambers produced his life preserver – a thick envelope containing four pages in Hiss's handwriting and a number of typewritten documents which he said had been copied on Hiss's typewriter. He charged that Hiss had pilfered these confidential state documents and passed them on to him in the service of Communism. Examination showed that they were in fact copies of authentic papers; and other testimony established that the transmission to the Russians of verbatim texts of these top-secret documents, or even one of them, would have enabled the Soviet Government to break the secret State Department code.

Up to that point in the investigation there had been some skeptics willing to assert that Chambers was a psychopathic liar. The production of the envelope of papers put the whole case in a new light. Nevertheless there was an intimation from the Justice Department December 1 that the Hiss-Chambers case would be dropped unless additional evidence could be found. At that point Nixon performed his penultimate service in the Hiss case. In a private interview with Chambers, at the latter's Westminster, Maryland, farm, he was either told or was able to infer that Chambers had in his possession additional documentary evidence. Returning to Washington on the evening of December 1, Nixon made a forcing play. "I ordered that a subpoena be served upon Mr. Chambers," he said later, "for any other documents that he might have."

Next evening, in a cloak-and-dagger scene that has few parallels in Congressional history, an agent of the committee served the subpoena on the ex-Communist. Chambers led him in darkness to a pumpkin in his garden. From it he drew five rolls of microfilm containing photostatic copies of confidential and secret documents from the State Department and the Bureau of Standards.

The pumpkin papers, for all their melodramatic qualities, gave the case an air of irrefragable substance and realism. In saving Chambers, they doomed Hiss. A New York grand jury that had been on the verge of indicting the ex-Communist for perjury reversed itself when Nixon rushed to New York and testified that it had to be Hiss who lied in saying he had not turned official documents over to Chambers. Simultaneously the FBI was able to establish that the pumpkin papers and letters from Mrs. Priscilla Hiss had been typed on the same Woodstock machine, a key factor in the case. On December 15 the grand jury climaxed the investigation by bringing an indictment for perjury against Hiss.

That ended Nixon's participation in the Hiss case. Two trials followed; the first ended in a hung jury voting eight to four for conviction; the second on January 21, 1950, brought in a verdict of guilty. All appeals were denied, and Hiss served a prison sentence.

Nixon Draws the Moral

In Nixon's mind there was never any doubt about the guilt of Alger Hiss. Chambers recalled later in his book *Witness* that he was sometimes amused by Nixon's "martial Quakerism" and by a "vivid picture of him in their blackest hour of the Hiss case . . . saying in his quietly savage way: 'If the American people understood the real character of Hiss, they would boil him in oil'."

Waiting until Hiss had been convicted, Nixon applied for the first time in three years for a special order to address the House of Representatives, and on January 26, 1950, reviewed at length not only his part in the original Hiss-Chambers investigation, but also the broader political implications of the case. By that time he was preparing to campaign for the Senate, and he couched his analysis of Communist infiltration of the federal government in terms of a far-reaching threat to the security of the nation.

Pointing out, first, that the conspiracy of the 'thirties had been "amazingly effective," and, second, that Bentley and Chambers had named a "great number of people other than Hiss" as being implicated, Nixon cited the corroborative evidence of Julian Wadleigh and produced other hitherto unpublished papers said to be in the handwriting of a deceased Treasury expert, Harry Dexter White.

"The conspiracy was so effective, so well entrenched

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and so well-defended by apologists in high places," he said, "that it was not discovered and apprehended until it was too late to prosecute. . . . There were several occasions during the past 10 years on which, if vigorous action had been taken, the conspiracy could have been exposed . . . [but] . . . the three-year statute of limitations had lapsed and it is too late to do anything. . . ."

Nixon reviewed evidence indicating the FBI, the White House, the State Department, the Atomic Energy Commission and others were aware that charges had been made against Hiss and others; that "top officials were aware of the fact that the Russians were engaging in espionage activities against us even while they were our allies." He pointed scornfully to the fact that, whereas Canada had convicted nine atomic spies within a year after the Gouzenko revelations, the Truman Administration had a record of "humiliating failure to take any action whatever in this country against the individuals involved in wartime espionage for the Soviet Union until it was too late to prosecute. . . ." He condemned the Administration for "inexcusable inaction," ridiculed Truman for calling the Hiss case a "red herring," and marveled at Dean Acheson's refusal to "turn his back" on Alger Hiss.

Then Nixon went to the heart of his polemic against the Administration, a theme that was to recur again and again in later campaigns: "Why was it that Administration officials persisted in their refusal to act through the years, even when substantial evidence of espionage activities was brought to their attention? . . . The reason for their failure to act was not that they were disloyal. What was happening was that Administration leaders were treating the reports of Communist espionage on a 'politics-as-usual' basis. . . . They treated Communist infiltration into our American institutions like any ordinary petty political scandal . . . rendered the greatest possible disservice to the people of the nation."

He concluded with two practicable recommendations: the extension of the statute of limitations on espionage cases from 3 to 10 years, and a tightening of standards used in loyalty checks. Specifically he proposed that the "loyalty program" be abandoned in favor of a "security program" which would enable the government to resolve doubt in its own favor "without the necessity of proving disloyalty and thereby reflecting on the character of a possibly loyal but indiscreet government employee."

The "Security Risk" Yardstick

Nixon was but one of a number in Congress who favored "security" rather than "loyalty" as a yardstick. To legal hairsplitters, and in some cases as a practical administrative measure, disloyalty would have to border on treason, a charge that could be sustained under the Constitution only by an overt act and two witnesses. In the hysteria of the period the appealing simplicity of the Nixon proposal – as was later demonstrated when McCarthy went to work in earnest – was that individuals could be dismissed from government service arbitrarily, without knowing accuser or accusation or how even to frame an answer to so shapeless an anomaly. The cynicism of the procedure, which was adopted only gradually, was that a government employee dismissed on the strength of anonymous charges as a security risk found himself no less brutally stigmatized than if the finding had questioned his loyalty.

In the peroration of his Hiss speech Nixon warned: "The great lesson which should be learned from the Alger Hiss case is that we are not just dealing with espionage agents who get 30 pieces of silver to obtain the blueprint of a new weapon – the Communists do that, too – but this is a far more sinister type of activity, because it permits the enemy to guide and shape our policy; it disarms and dooms our diplomats to defeat in advance before they go to conferences; traitors in the high councils of our own government make sure the deck is stacked on the Soviet side of the diplomatic table."

His objective as a skilled polemicist was to lay the groundwork for his later charge that the Administration in power had shown gross defects of judgment in dealing with the issue and should therefore be summarily voted out of office.

For his part in unmasking Hiss, Nixon's prestige was not only high but untarnished, this despite the fact that the procedures of the Un-American Activities Committee were subject to harsh criticism. While the Hiss case was still under investigation, October 5, 1948, Rep. Jacob K. Javits, later Senator from New York, launched a typical attack. In a signed article he asserted: "The Un-American Activities Committee in the Hiss-Chambers controversy acted as a trial body, but the protections provided by a trial at law were entirely lacking." And Javits was one of those who at the time urged dissolution of the committee.

Nixon was not prepared to acknowledge shortcomings in the Hiss-Chambers affair, but in talking with newsmen December 19 he was less reticent about other cases. "I'll admit the committee has made mistakes and deserves criticism," he said. "Sure I'll name one. I believe the handling of the case involving Dr. Edward Condon was unfair. I firmly believe that Dr. Condon should have been heard by the committee before any statement about him was made public. I regret that he has not [yet] been heard by the committee – and I think he should be heard now."

Others like Rep. Chet Holifield joined Javits in demanding more far-reaching forms of committee self-discipline. Some were prepared to acknowledge that Nixon's personal code of investigation marked the first introduction of reasonable standards of fair play in the treatment of witnesses, but it took the strange and in-

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glorious spy-chasing excesses of the McCarthy period to bring Congress as a whole back to a sane perspective. The irony of it was that, whereas Nixon as a campaigner seemed to gravitate naturally toward reckless overstatement, he left a largely blameless record in the House during his handling of some of the period's most explosive issues.

Politically, the 1950 verdict against Hiss provided the impetus for a tortured struggle unique in American history. The issue in that struggle was essentially whether the guilt of an individual could by wordy legerdemain be transferred to a Democratic Administration, to the Democratic Party as a whole, and therefore to a majority of the American people, and whether that guilt could be defined as treason. The struggle was commonly thought to have begun a month after the January verdict, with Joe McCarthy's reckless Wheeling speech, but it is a question whether the Wisconsin Senator was the only or even the most culpable member of his party. Largely overlooked in the chorus of "treason" that erupted afterward was a message from Herbert Hoover congratulating Nixon on his role in the Hiss case. "The conviction of Alger Hiss," the former President said, "was due to your patience and persistence alone. At last the stream of treason that existed in our government has been exposed in a fashion that all may believe."

When a respected ex-President could thus loosely assume the existence of a "stream" of treason, who need fear the consequences of echoing him? And how were men of lesser standing to get a hearing for their plea of caution? The hysteria latent in a word like treason, used incautiously, was self-generating.

"Chance Taker in Foreign Affairs"

One other major issue attracted Nixon's not wholly passive interest as a member of the House – foreign affairs and the consolidation of the free world coalition against international Communism.

As incident early in his Washington career was one of the forces that bent the twig. The House in the summer of 1947 created a select committee of 19 to study the problem of overseas relief and rehabilitation: the available resources, qualified agencies, and measures to assess relative needs and correlate assistance. Nixon read about his appointment to the committee in the papers – the only freshman chosen – and in late August, under the chairmanship of Christian Herter, sailed with the group for Europe. It was on this trip that Nixon for the first time came in personal contact with both Communist activities and the dreadful postwar poverty and suffering on which Communism was nourishing itself. After setting up temporary headquarters in London, the committee toured the Ruhr and divided itself into regional teams for an intensive month-long survey of industry, agriculture and administrative facilities. Returning to Washington in October, it compiled the first of a long series of Congressional reports on foreign aid, a voluminous study that paved the way for the Marshall Plan and enlisted Nixon's lasting support for the doctrine of multilateral interdependence.

Describing his views later, he classed himself basically as an internationalist because of his Quaker heritage and declared: "I'm not necessarily a respecter of the status quo in foreign affairs. I am a chance taker in foreign affairs. I would take chances for peace – the Quakers have a passion for peace, you know." Whether it was Quakerism or the Herter committee that oriented his thinking, the record shows that from 1947 on, he voted consistently and more or less generously for programs to support the free world alliance.

But if he became a crusading internationalist, it was only after his experiences in Congress had been supplemented by a wealth of travel and high-level policy discussion as Vice President. In the House, Nixon was content to be a soldier in the rear ranks except where his own political life was at stake. On one occasion, when a poll showed his constituency was critical of his stand on the Marshall Plan, he flew to California and hurriedly made some 50 speeches to explain and justify his support of the program. Otherwise his chief contribution was in helping to overcome pockets of isolationism in the Republican Party.

All in all, the Hiss case remained the highlight of Nixon's two terms in the House. For a time he and his supporters nurtured a legend that in pushing the Hiss investigation he had incurred the implacable hatred of the Communist apparatus and its dupes in the ranks of "intellectuals" and "liberals." After 1958, however, there were few references to this myth, partly because in retrospect Nixon's part in the Hiss case reflected no discredit on him, and partly because he had added enough to his public stature not to require anything so shoddy in the way of a defense.

NEXT WEEK: *Nixon in the Senate; he defends the strategy of MacArthur*

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Faulkner: End of a Road

by Irving Howe

The Snopeses have always been there. No sooner did Faulkner come upon his central subject – how the corruption of the homeland, staining its best sons, left them without standards or defense – than Snopesism followed inexorably. Almost anyone can detect the Snopeses, but describing them is very hard. The usual reference to "amorality," while accurate, is not sufficiently distinctive and by itself does not allow us to place them, as they should be placed, in a historical moment. Perhaps the most important thing to be said about the Snopeses is that they are what comes afterwards: the creatures that emerge from the devastation, with the slime still upon their lips.

The Mansion
by William Faulkner
(Random House; $4.75)

Let a world collapse, in the South or Russia, and there appear figures of coarse ambition driving their way up from beneath the social bottom, men to whom moral claims are not so much absurd as incomprehensible, sons of bushwhackers or *muzhiks* drifting in from nowhere and taking over through the sheer outrageousness of their monolithic force. They become presidents of local banks and chairmen of party regional committees, and later, a trifle slicked up, they muscle their way into Congress or the Politburo. Scavengers without inhibition, they need not believe in the crumbling official code of their society; they need only learn to mimic its sounds.

In a prefatory note to *The Mansion*, the new novel which completes the Snopes trilogy, Faulkner says that he has been working on this clan since 1925. We can well believe it. The Snopeses have appeared in earlier books, *Sartoris* and *Sanctuary*, which contain snatches of portraiture or anecdote later to be worked up in *The Hamlet*, *The Town* and *The Mansion*. One would speculate that by the mid-twenties, after Faulkner had returned to Mississippi from World War I, the originals of Snopesism, red-neck rascals and demagogues, had come to the social forefront. Perhaps it was some shock of perception, some encounter with an adulterated (because real-life) model of Flem or I.O. or Ike Snopes, which first prompted him to look back into the fate of the homeland, mulling over the collapse of the Sartorises and Compsons which left the field open for Flem Snopes and his plague of relatives.

In Faulkner's version – it is amply grounded in historical reality – the South by the turn of the century had come to resemble a social vacuum. The homeland drifted in poverty and xenophobia, without social direction or moral authority. Traditional relationships had decayed but there were no workable new ones. Into this vacuum, with a shattering energy, came the Snopeses. And insofar as they are both its sign and product, Faulkner's description of them in *The Hamlet* as "sourceless" is extremely brilliant.

Most of *The Hamlet*, published in 1940, was written during the previous ten or twelve years, and together with *Go Down, Moses*, brings to a close Faulkner's great creative period. It is a comic extravaganza, half family chronicle and half tall tale, strung together in loosely-related episodes that portray the swarming of the Snopeses upon Frenchman's Bend, a hamlet in a rich river-bottom, "hill-cradled and remote," at the southern rim of Yoknapatawpha county. By the end of the book Flem Snopes, who had begun as a clerk in the village store, is ready to leave for Jefferson, the town where he will become a bank president and then owner of a splendid mansion.

Flem towers over the book, a figure with a marvellous energy for deceit, an almost Jonsonian monomania in pursuit of money. In Flem, Faulkner has embodied the commercial ethos with a grotesque purity, both as it represents the power of an undeviating will and as it appears in its ultimate flimsiness. This *tour de force* depends upon Faulkner's refusal to make Flem "human," his steadiness in holding Flem to an extreme conception which, violating verisimilitude, reaches truth. Though Flem stands for everything Faulkner despises and fears, he is treated in *The Hamlet* with a comic zest, a sheer amazement that such a monster could exist or even be imagined. The danger is real, but the battlefield still confined, and opposed to Flem there stands as a mature antagonist, if in the end a defeated one, the humane sewing-machine agent V. K. Ratliff. One of the few positive characters in Faulkner's novels who is utterly convincing and neither hysterical nor a canting windbag, Ratliff provides an aura of security for the book. His very presence makes possible a sustained comic perspective upon the Snopes invasion, and in its own right speaks for the possibilities of civilized existence.

Seventeen years intervened between *The Hamlet* and *The Town*, years not merely of honors, prizes, public declamations and communiques, but of a slowly mounting crisis in Faulkner's career. The more he kept assuring us that man would "endure," the less assurance his own work showed. Though the novels he wrote in the forties and fifties contain many fine and even brilliant parts, they are on the whole forced, anxious and high-pitched, the work of a man, no longer driven, who now drives himself. *Intruder in the Dust* launches the marvellous Negro curmudgeon Lucas Beauchamp, but goes utterly dead with pages of barren Southern oratory. *Requiem for a Nun* contains some exquisite rhapsodic interludes, but in the central sections, so clearly meant to be dramatic, it falls into inert statement. *The Fable*, which may come to hold a place in Faulkner's work somewhat analogous to *Pierre* in Melville's, is a book noble in conception but incoherent and hollow in execution.

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What went wrong? It would be idle to try to say in a brief article, but let me at least note a few symptoms of the trouble. In all these works there is a reliance upon a high-powered rhetoric which bears the outer marks of the earlier Faulkner style, but is really a kind of self-imitation, a whipped-up fury pouring out in wanton excess. There is a tendency to fall back upon hi-jinks of plot, a flaunting arbitrariness and whimsicality of invention – as if Faulkner, wearied of telling stories and establishing characters, were now deliberately breaking his own spell and betraying an impatience with his own skill. Consciously or not, he seems to be underscoring the incongruity between the over-wrought, perhaps incommunicable seriousness of his intentions – his having reached a point where language seems no longer to suffice – and the triviality of the devices to which he turns.

There is, further, an apparent disengagement, perhaps even a disenchantment with the Yoknapatawpha locale which had so fruitfully obsessed him in the past. Faulkner has now entered the familiar workaday world in which you and I live, at least one part of him has, the man you see in the photographs dressed in a natty grey topcoat; and no longer is it possible to imagine him, like Balzac, calling on his deathbed for a doctor – "get old Doc Peabody!" – from his own novels. His creative journey, begun with the nihilism of the twenties in *Soldier's Pay*, has led him, not as his conservative critics have maintained, to the strength of a traditionalist morality, but to the more perilous edge of the nihilism of the fifties.

Faulkner has become our contemporary. He can no longer work within his established means; one senses a bewilderment and disorientation spreading through his pages, by which the subject of his earlier novels now becomes the force constraining his later ones. How else can one explain the frantic verbal outpourings of Gavin Stevens, the character so disastrously his *alter ego*? Anyone with a touch of feeling, to say nothing of respect, must respond to this new Faulkner who so evidently shares our hesitations and doubts. But in truth this is no longer the man who wrote *The Sound and the Fury*, not even the one who wrote *The Hamlet*.

By the time he turned back to the Snopeses, completing the trilogy in the last few years, Faulkner could sustain neither his old fury nor his old humor. Both, to be sure, break out repeatedly in *The Town* and *The Mansion*; there are sections which, if torn out of context, read nearly as well as anything he has done in the past. But they have to be torn out of context.

Nor is the difficulty to be found in the over-all design of the trilogy. That, on the contrary, is superb. Faulkner sees how Flem Snopes must assume the appearance of respectability, which in turn will rob him of a portion of his demonic powers and pinch him into an ordinary helplessness. Faulkner also sees how Flem, though safe from attack by the "traditionalist" moral leaders of the county, must meet his destruction at the hands of a Nemesis from within his tribe: Mink Snopes, a pitiful terrier of a man who spends 38 years in jail because, as he believes, Flem has failed him, and who knows that the meaning of his life is now to kill Flem.

Indeed, one can anticipate scores of critical essays which will trace the ways in which each incident in the trilogy contributes to the total scheme, and which thereby will create the false impression that a satisfying congruence exists between the conceptual design and the novels as they are. (This, I think, is the single greatest weakness of American criticism today: that, in its infatuation with the ideas of literary structure as a system of thematic strands, it fails to consider performance, execution as the decisive measure.) Yet, as regards *The Town* and *The Mansion*, such a congruence is not to be found, for only fitfully do these novels fulfill the needs and possibilities of Faulkner's over-all design.

Let me cite an example. One of the Snopeses, Cla'ence, goes in for politics and in 1945, running for Congress, suddenly declares himself an opponent of the KKK. This shrewd maneuver, apparently made in response to the changing atmosphere of the South, greatly upsets Ratliff and Gavin Stevens, who fear that the minority of "liberal" Yoknapatawpha citizens will now be taken in. Ratliff then arranges that, at a picnic in Frenchman's Bend, a gang of dogs should mistake Cla'ence for a familiar thicket which they visit regularly each day – and this dampening of the candidate makes him so ridiculous that he must withdraw from the race. For as Uncle Billy Varner, the Croesus of Frenchman's Bend, says: "I aint going to have Beat Two and Frenchman's Bend represented nowhere by nobody that ere a son-a-bitching dog that happens by cant tell from a fence post."

Simply as an anecdote, this comes off beautifully. It has a plausibility of its own. Faulkner can tease this sort of joke along better than anyone else, just as he knows the mind of a grasping little demagogue like Cla'ence Snopes better than anyone else. But in the context of the trilogy the incident is damaging, since it suggests that the threat of Snopesism can easily be defeated by the country shrewdness of a Ratliff – an assumption which all the preceding matter has led us gravely to doubt and which, if we do credit it, must now persuade us that the danger embodied by the Snopeses need not be taken as seriously as the whole weight of the trilogy has seemed to argue. The incident is fine, and so is the over-all pattern; but their relationship is destructive.

There are other, more important difficulties. Through both *The Town* and *The Mansion* Flem Snopes moves steadily toward the center of Yoknapatawpha economic power. The meaning of this is fully registered, but Flem himself, as a represented figure, is not nearly so vivid in these novels as in *The Hamlet*. Partly this seems due to a flagging of creative gifts, so that, for the first time, one feels Faulkner is dutifully completing a cycle of novels rather than writing for the sheer pleasure and immediate need of writing. Partly it is due to his propensity for avoiding the direct and dramatic, for straining the action through the blurred – and blurring – consciousness of the insufferable Stevens and the mediocre young Charles Mallison. Partly it is the result of a genuine literary problem: that Faulkner, having set up Flem with such a perfection of malevolence in *The Hamlet*, now faced the difficult task of finding ways to dispose of him, as a character, in the two later books. Apparently aware of this problem, Faulkner tries to outflank it in *The Mansion* by keeping Flem in the background as a figure whom we barely see, though his impact upon the other characters is always felt. That Flem Snopes, of all the marvellous monsters in American literature, would end

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up seeming shadowy and vague – who could have anticipated this?

Faulkner has made the mistake of softening Flem; he verges at times on sociological and psychological explanations of Flem's behavior; and he even shows a few traces of sympathy for Flem, which is as unfortunate as if Ben Jonson broke into tears over Volpone. When the Flem we see – or, alas, more often hear about – is "the old fishblooded son of a bitch who had a vocabulary of two words, one being No and the other Foreclose," all is for the best in the best of Faulknerian worlds; but when it is a Flem who becomes still another item in the omniverous musings of Gavin Stevens, then he suffers a fate worse than even he deserves.

The greatest trouble, finally, with *The Mansion*, as with *The Town*, is that Faulkner feels obliged to give a large portion of his space to material that does not directly involve the Snopeses. Again, there is a conflict between the design of the trilogy and what Faulkner can bring off at the moment of composition. The trilogy requires that a new force of opposition to the Snopeses be found, since they have moved to the town where, presumably, Ratliff can no longer operate with his accustomed assurance. In both *The Town* and *The Mansion* Ratliff suffers a sad constriction, all too often playing straight-man to Gavin Stevens. For the new force of opposition to the Snopeses, as the Faulkner *afficionado* can sadly predict, now comes largely from Stevens, the District Attorney with a degree from Heidelberg and a passion for rant. Stevens not only speaks the underbaked wisdom that has become Faulkner's specialty since his Nobel Prize speech in Stockholm; he also betrays how deluded Faulkner is in his notion of what an intellectual can or should be.

The middle section of *The Mansion* deals with Stevens' relation to Linda Snopes, stepdaughter of Flem and daughter of Eula Varner Snopes, whom Gavin had worshipped in vain throughout *The Town*. Linda has left Jefferson; married a Jewish sculptor in New York; gone off to the Spanish Civil War, where she suffered a puncture of her eardrums; returned to Jefferson as a member of the Communist Party; and now loves Gavin (also in vain), "meddles" with the Negroes, and shares a home with Flem in cold silence, until her schemes lead to Mink being freed from jail, destroying Flem and thereby avenging the suicide of her mother. Gavin loves Linda too, but once more in vain. For reasons that two readings of the novel do not yield to me, they fail to marry or do anything else that might reasonably be expected from a man and a woman in love, except to purr sympathetically at each other. Very likely some exegetes will discover or infer a reason for this curious situation, but that will not be at all the same as justifying it in the context of the novel.

In any case, this whole section is poorly managed and frequently tedious. The New York locale, Linda's venture into Communism, the snooping of an FBI man – these are not matters that Faulkner can handle with authority. The relationship between Gavin and Linda, never allowed to settle into quiet clarity, elicits at most a mild pity, since Faulkner seems unable to face up to whatever remnants of Southern "chivalry," romantic ideology or plain ordinary repression drive him to think of love as a grandiloquent "doom." The truth, I suspect, is that Faulkner cannot treat adult sexual experience with a forthright steadiness, despite the frequency with which sex appears in his earlier books as a sympton of disorder and violation. Only at the end of the novel, as Stevens and Linda kiss goodbye and he slides his hand down her back, "simply touching her . . . supporting her buttocks as you cup the innocent hipless bottom of a child," does Faulkner break into that candor for which this whole section cries out.

If the Snopes trilogy, bringing together nearly the best and nearly the worst in Faulkner's career, is both imposing and seriously marred, *The Mansion* taken more modestly, as a novel in its own right, has some superb sections. Perhaps the reader who is not steeped in Faulkner's work and cares nothing about its relation to his previous books is in the best position to accept it with pleasure. For whenever Mink Snopes appears, the prose becomes hard, grave, vibrant, and Faulkner's capacity, as Malcolm Cowley has well put it, for "telling stories about men or beasts who fulfilled their destiny," comes into full play. Like the convict in *The Wild Palms*, Mink drives steadily toward his end, without fear or hope, unblinking and serene.

Faulkner begins *The Mansion* by retelling a story told in *The Hamlet*, but with far greater depth of feeling. Mink Snopes, galled by the arrogance of his wealthy neighbor Houston and himself full of a bitter meanness as well as a bottom-dog dignity which draws the line beyond which humiliation is not to be borne, finally kills Houston and stands trial for murder. He expects Flem to rescue him, since for him, as for all the other Snopeses, Flem is the agent, the connection between their clan and the outer world. Flem, however, coldly abandons Mink, and Mink, sentenced to prison, lives only for the day he can destroy Flem. A strategem of Flem's lures Mink into attempting an escape; his sentence is doubled; but he waits patiently, sweating out his blood over the state's cotton. At the age of 63, his body as puny as a child's, he comes out a free man.

The portrait of Mink is beyond praise: a simple ignorant soul who sees existence as an unending manichean struggle between Old Moster (God) and Them (the world), with Them forever and even rightly and naturally triumphant, always in control of events as they move along, yet with Old Moster standing in reserve, not to intervene or to help but to draw a line, like Mink himself, and say that beyond this line no creature, not even a wretched little Mink, dare be tried. Mink's is the heroism of the will, a man living out his need: what we might call his destiny.

In the opening part of the novel, as well as in its brilliant final pages – where Mink goes to Memphis to buy a gun, gets caught up in a superbly-rendered revivalist sect led by Marine Sergeant Goodyhay, mooches a quarter from a cop and supposes that this is one of those new dispensations he had dimly heard described as the "WP and A" and finally, as if in a pageant of fatality, returns to Jefferson to kill his cousin – Faulkner is writing at very close to the top of his bent. The pages quiver with evocation, the language becomes taut, and Faulkner's sense of the power of life as it floods a man beyond his reason or knowledge, becomes overwhelming. Here is Mink reflecting:

"In 1948 he and Flem would both be old men and he even said aloud:

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'What a shame we cant both of us jest come out two old men setting peaceful in the sun or the shade, waiting to die together, not even thinking no more of hurt or harm or getting even, not even remembering no more about hurt or harm or anguish or revenge,' – two old men not only incapable of further harm to anybody but even incapable of remembering hurt or harm. . . . *But I reckon not,* he thought. *Cant neither of us help nothing now. Cant neither one of us take nothing back.*"

And here is Mink approaching Jefferson after 38 years, as he rests on a truck: "He was quite comfortable. But mainly he was off the ground. That was the danger, what a man had to watch against: once you laid flat on the ground, right away the earth started in to draw you back down into it. The very moment you were born out of your mother's body, the power and drag of the earth was already at work on you . . . And you knew it too."

Reading such passages in the fullness of their context, is like returning to a marvellous world that has gone a little dim, the world Faulkner made; and then all seems well.

MOVIES

New Directors, Old Directions

The most interesting film news from France in the last year has heralded the rise of a group of about 20 new film directors, a number of whom are not yet 30 years old. I have now seen three of their films. All of them display remarkable competences, although none of them is a satisfactory picture.

Back to the Wall, directed by Edouard Molinaro, is the most successful of the three and is the most disappointing: because it attempts so little. It is a hard-bitten suspense story about a husband who discovers his wife's intrigue and devises a blackmail scheme to separate her from her lover. There are, of course, unforeseen conclusions. The plot has two holes in it: the wife's reaction to the husband's revelation of what he has done with the lover is incredible; equally so is the husband's lapse that leads to the denouement. (Apologies for all these ambiguities, but there is an unwritten law about suspense films.) Molinaro's style owes something to Clouzot in its tight, driving quality and the way it pushes your nose into the pivotal horror. But the picture does not frighten, as Clouzot's frequently do; most of the time it merely makes you go "tsk-tsk" at the husband's devilish ingenuity. However, even without these imperfections, it would be disappointing that a bright young man wanted to make simply one more shallow suspense film.

Back to the Wall (Ellis)
The Lovers (Zenith)
The 400 Blows (Zenith)

Gerard Oury and Jeanne Moreau are credible as the husband and wife, Philippe Nicaud is unpersuasive as the lover, and Claire Maurier is attractively worldly as a café-owner.

The Lovers, directed and written by Louis Malle, is, in essence, as silly a picture as I have seen in some time, but although it is much less successful on its own terms than is Molinaro's it is much more welcome. For it is, as it should be, a young man's film, not an aping of slick success. A young provincial wife, bored with a busy husband, toys with the idea of taking a lover. The husband invites the candidate to their house for a week-end. After her car breaks down, the wife is given a lift by a strange young man whom her husband also invites to stay. That night – probably one of the most protracted in screen history – begins with animosity between the newcomer and the wife and progresses through courtship to love-making to a morning in which the youth and the wife drive off together to start life anew, leaving her intended lover, her husband, and her child. We are asked to believe – and to sympathize with – the thesis that one satisfactory sexual encounter, presumably her first such, is enough to make the wife spurn her whole past as a wasteful sham and go off with the young man who has brought her the Truth so pleasantly and quickly.

The wisdom of the film is thus somewhat less than profound and indeed is somewhat dated. It belongs to the "I tell you, Sex is Beautiful" school of the early part of the century: at the latest, to its thirties' manifestation, when it was believed that to master Van de Velde was to master life. One shudders for the future of the pair, particularly the woman. But the film's unrestrained romantic plunge into the Reality of Sex is at least purely youthful. We cannot help being touched by its naïveté, but we can certainly hear a fervent, wholesouled note.

Malle, a former film critic, has made his picture generally well, with the help of the beautiful photography of Henri Decae. (It contains the best use of a wide screen for intimate scenes that I know; here we are not made to think, as usual, of two disembodied heads lost on a prairie.) Malle's sense of statement is unreliable; he doesn't know when he has made his point and ought to move on. The all-life-in-a-night idea is worn thin; and the climax – the love-making – is detailed to the degree where the viewer either has to leave the theater so that the couple up there can be alone or else giggle to render it make-believe so that he can stay. A sense of proportion and a larger view of human verities will doubtless come to him. Meanwhile it is clear that Louis Malle has a real lyric and technical gift.

Again Jeanne Moreau has the leading feminine role and in a dour-mouthed way acquits herself well. Again the lover is uninterestingly cast.

The 400 Blows was directed by Francois Truffault, also a film critic, and is an-

NIXON IS RUNNING *almost four to one over Rockefeller in the public polls, but not everywhere. Last week a student organization polled the Harvard faculty, and it develops that up there it's Rockefeller five to one! Now this discrepancy is worth contemplating; worth agonizing over, as a matter of fact, because even though there are many more people than Harvard professors, the imbalance is something we are supposed to regret.*

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other in the long line of French films about lonely children which includes *Poil de Carotte* and *La Maternelle*. The title, I gather, is a literal translation of a phrase meaning the entire gamut of punishment. Its theme is that of the unwanted child who behaves worse and worse because he knows he is unwanted and who thus eventually "justifies" those who want to be rid of him. It is executed here only passably, particularly in the light of its two predecessors just mentioned. This kind of film succeeds to the degree that we suffer with the child, and I was too aware of devices and derivation to be much moved. Truffault ends his picture some time before its close and uses a photographic trick to conclude it. The baffled boy's face simply freezes into a still photo; is it a symbol of paralysis or does it predict a news story about a suicide?

Some of the film is technically accomplished, in a slavishly veristic tone. The interiors are lighted in an overhead, silver way that suggests a cross between tabloid technique and silent movies; and most of the street scenes have been photographed with concealed cameras so that the actors are surrounded by the realest of extras. Indeed Truffault is so interested in photography and photographic naturalism that he has omitted to stir us theatrically. Still, if he does not sacrifice his ability on the altar of trivial facsimile or ingrown "cinemism," Truffault, who is only 27, may proceed to good film-making.

The boy, Jean-Pierre Leaud, is well-schooled but stolid. Claire Maurier is in this picture, too – convincing as the mother who is torn between affection for her son and a certain regret that he exists. Albert Remy is friendly and blusteringly weak as the father, and Jeanne Moreau (again!) makes one of the briefest of guest star appearances as a woman walking a dog.

That these pictures are variously faulty is less important than that new directors are finding work in French films. (The only Hollywood director under 30 is, I believe, Stanley Kubrick.) Youth is by no means necessarily a directorial virtue, but a film world that gives opportunities to young directors of talent is not only insuring its future, it is also refreshing those who operate in it at present.

STANLEY KAUFFMANN

THEATER

A Living Audience

To judge by the printed text, *Tonight We Improvise* would seem to be unworkable, particularly on the American stage. Written just two years after *Six Characters in Search of an Author*, it is, first of all, merely a reworking of the same theme in a more diffuse and chaotic manner. Once again, the action is located in a theater; once again, it embodies Pirandello's conviction that the artificialities of the stage are inadequate to the expression of authentic passions.

Tonight We Improvise
by Luigi Pirandello
(The Living Theater)

To illustrate this, both plays feature an egocentric director more concerned with advancing his own personality and career than with the demands of a play. But if the director of *Six Characters* is in conflict with the author's characters, the director of *Tonight We Improvise* (a three-foot tyrant named Dr. Hinkfuss) is busy combating his own acting company – not to mention the spectators who rag him mercilessly throughout the action. The result is an atmosphere of anarchy and rebellion – often funny, more often incoherent, ultimately fatal to Pirandello's central idea.

The revolt of the actors reveals the play's intrinsic flaw. While the director is more preoccupied with stage effects and abstruse theories, the actors – supposedly improvising their parts from a Pirandello short story – insist on following the truth of their feelings. After two acts of contention, the actors throw the director out of the theater and settle down to an uninterrupted presentation of plot. Theatrically, this proves to be an unfortunate victory: the last act is composed less of authentic passion than of Sicilian melodrama, operatic monologues, and jealousy scenes in a passion-tearing vein. While Pirandello has successfully demonstrated the absurdity of his director's approach to the drama, his own alternative proves equally unconvincing and unsatisfying.

The revolt of the audience in *Tonight We Improvise* poses a more special problem, for it is almost unthinkable that sober American spectators would comment out loud on a performance or a play. The American spectator will applaud stage settings, entrances, exits, and curtain calls; but aside from these modest tokens of his presence, only a cough, a sneeze, and the occasional rustling of his coat ever break his traditional silence. Drugged, stupefied, and hypnotized by the magical tricks of illusionistic theater, he sits politely on his padded chair, passively cast as Peeping Tom. In such a sleepy atmosphere, the idea of someone uttering hostile remarks is almost inconceivable.

Nevertheless, The Living Theater company has handled this play so deftly and delivered such an effective assault on the audience's peace of mind that the play suddenly becomes extremely plausible in all but its basic flaw. The company is not distinguished by the brilliance of its acting (which rarely rises above or falls below a kind of inspired amateurism), and the last act, with its greater technical demands, remains tedious – perhaps even more tedious than necessary. Yet, despite some of the trials of the evening, I found this an extraordinary performance; and I no longer doubt that The Living Theater is the freshest group I have seen in years; that it possesses an authentic artistic intensity; and that it more than makes up in intelligence, imagination, and sheer daring whatever it lacks in professional skill.

The director, Julian Beck, has reworked Pirandello's text not only to preserve the original spirit but to impose added meanings as well. The Reinhardtian director, Dr. Hinkfuss, has been transformed into an eccentric experimental theater director named Julian Beck, whose melancholy head (shaped like an auk's egg) is crammed full of pretentious *avant-garde* theories, and who has a penchant for commenting on his own abstract stage decor ("It's all very beautiful, but what does it *mean*?"); Hinkfuss' Sicilian religious procession, introduced for local color, has been converted into a short movie called "Sicily,

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Land of Passion," in which collages of overexposed color film blend with occasional glimpses of an icon of the Virgin, all to the accompaniment of groans and gargling sounds on the loudspeaker; and Pirandello's disgruntled spectators have now become skeptical hipsters given to guying all the shibboleths of *avant-garde* theater. At the same time, the audience is constantly being turned on – encouraged to walk out of the theater, badgered into speaking up about the play, confronted in the lobby with a continuation of the action, and loosened up by a series of outrageous practical jokes (at one point, I found myself in the aisle, holding on foolishly to my coat, while an actor enjoyed the show from my seat). The company has used Pirandello's play not only to indict the careerist director but to satirize its own techniques; in fact, the total effect is a hilarious attack on the solemnity of the entire theatrical occasion.

In short, by using the dramas in their repertory as scenarios rather than holy texts, these actors are accomplishing the astonishing feat of restoring a living relationship between the spectator and the stage. An effort is being made to create new responses in the spectator by shocking him out of his old ones – to create, in effect, a new spectator – and once again, the audience seems as youthful, buoyant, and alive as the actors; once again, the theater gives off a relaxed and casual air. Certainly, one of the major reasons for the pallid quality of recent commercial theater has been the extraordinary pomposity of the theatrical event coupled with the playwright's reluctance to agitate the tranquilized stupor of the audience – even "experimental plays" like *Our Town* actually comfort the spectator by complacently affirming his most cherished pieties. The Living Theater, on the other hand, endowed with a spirit of joyous anarchy, is constantly breaking the hallowed theatrical contract, constantly destroying the barriers between life and art. The company's talents, I suspect, are not shaped for the more literary works of the past; but The Living Theater is creating an atmosphere in which suitable works will probably come to be written. In its understanding that there can be no living theater without a living audience, this group is paving the road towards real advance. ROBERT BRUSTEIN

Correspondence

The New Republic *welcomes communications in regard to subjects of current interest. Those of 300 words or less are most suitable for publication.*

The Real Scandal in Television

Sirs:

Your article "The Real Scandal in Television" (November 16) was most interesting and I agree wholeheartedly with the sentiments expressed. I thought you might like to know that during the past few weeks Sister Eone, the Librarian at the College of Saint Teresa, Winona, Minnesota, and I have been giving a series of talks on "Growing Up with Books" over KTCA-TV Channel 2 in St. Paul, Minnesota.

In spite of the hours spent in preparation for each telecast, no effort was deemed too much once we realized how the programs were appreciated by parents and children. The response opened our eyes to the possibility for good which could result from such a program on professional TV. If publishers could be made aware of the many requests at local bookstores for titles mentioned on the program, I wonder whether they might consider sponsoring such a series.

Sister M. Adrienne, OSF
Winona, Minn.

Eisenhower and the Steel Strike

Sirs:

I have been particularly interested in your comments on the current steel strike. . . . I am coming to feel about our President as Voltaire once felt about Louis XIV's minister, Mazarin: "He is guilty of all the good he did not do."

Henry L. Foote
San Jose, California

The Seagram Symposium

Sirs:

I thought it entirely appropriate that the panel discussion on the future of man (reported October 26) should have been sponsored by Joseph E. Seagram & Sons. After all, the Greek bases for the word "symposium" are a drinking *(posis)* together *(syn)*.

Mildred Porter Cleaves
Clarksburg, Md.

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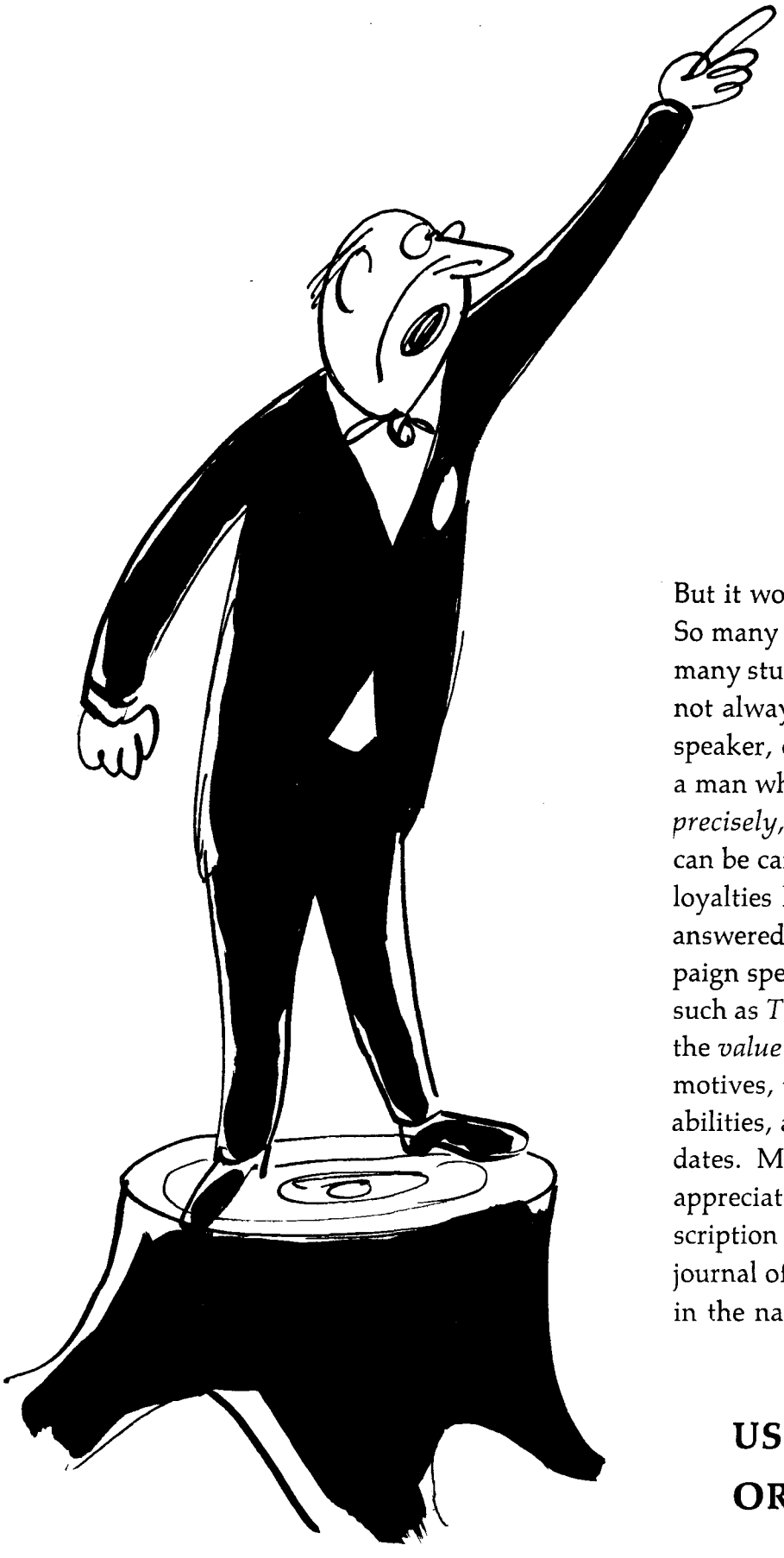

He could be saying something

But it won't be easy to know next year. So many words will be spoken from so many stumps or TV studios, and they will not always be words written by the speaker, or understood by him. What a man who wants to be elected means *precisely*, how he believes his program can be carried out, where his deepest loyalties lie – such questions are not answered by a casual reading of campaign speeches. The business of a journal such as *The New Republic* is to assess the *value* of the words, and also the motives, the political and intellectual abilities, and the past record of candidates. Many of your friends would appreciate your sending them a subscription for 1960 to America's *only* journal of opinion edited and published in the nation's capital.

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